Illegal Operation of STD Sooths

† 4514. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that STD booths allotted to handicapped and unemployed persons are being operated by other persons illegally;

(b) whether Government have taken any action thereto along with the details thereof during the last two years;

(c) whether any connivance of employees of Telephone Department has come to notice; and

(d) the details thereof during the last two years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Only 3 cases of STD booths allotted to handicapped person by BSNL were reported being operated by non-bonafide persons in last two years. All the three PCOs which were found to be used illegally have been disconnected. No such complaint has been received in MTNL.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

USO Fund for Rural Telephony

4515. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to amend the Telegraph Act in order to incorporate a clause whereby fixed line wireless services providers in rural areas are provided Universal Service Obligation (USO) fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering seriously to work out the details of providing USO fund for rural telephony to fixed line wireless

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

service providers as it is cost effective, convenient and can be installed without digging or laying of cables;

(d) if so, Government's plan in this regard: and

(e) the views of Aministrator, USO fund in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) and (b) The Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2C03 has already been amended and as per the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Rules, 2004, all Basic Service Operators, Cellular Mobile Service providers and Unified Access Services Licensees or any other entities as may be specified in this behalf by the Central Government from time to time are eligible for selection of Universal Service Provider (USP) for the purpose of subsidy support from USO Fund.

(c) and (d) Yes. Sir. Agreements have been signed with six Private Service Providers for providing subsidy towards operation and maintenance of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) installed by them. From 2002-03 to 2004-05, BSNL and the Private Service Providers have been disbursed Rs. 1805.94 crore and Rs. 8.64 crore respectively from the USO Fund. Further, BSNL has entered into an agreement with USOF for providing rural household DELs in 1267 specified SDCAs upto 30th September, 2005 on WLL fixed line DELs or land line fixed DELs.

(e) USO Fund was set up to provide access to basic telegraph services to people in rural and remote areas. The subsidy support is being provided to private for operation, maintenance and for replacement of Multi Access Radio Relay (MARR) VPTs. Agreements have been signed with BSNL and other private operators for providing VPTs in the 66,822 remaining uncovered villages, Rural Community Phones (RCPs) and Individual Rural household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs).

Revival of Indian Telephone Industries Limited, Bangalore

4516. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Security and exchange Board of India (SEBI) has exempted Government from open offer for the ailing Indian Telephone Industries Ltd., Bangalore;